

This report is produced by OCHA Afghanistan in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period 6 March 2012.

I. HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

- An avalanche reportedly killed 33 people in Shaki district of Badakhshan province. Four people were injured, while many more are reported to be missing.
- Access to the remote district is extremely difficult. Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FOCUS), an affiliate of the Agha Khan Development Network (AKDN), sent a team from neighboring Tajikistan and is trying to reach the area with emergency shelter assistance.
- Immediate relief needs include search and rescue, emergency medical assistance, food, and emergency shelter

II. Situation Overview

Thirty three people reportedly died as a result of an avalanche that occurred on 3 March 2012 in Dispy village, Shaki district, Badakhshan province, on the Tajikistan border. Local rescue teams from neighboring villages have rescued seven people in Dispy village, which has a population of 206 people. Many more people are feared missing as initial reports indicate that 20 houses were completely destroyed.

Shaki district is very remote with widely scattered settlements. In winter, the district is inaccessible by road and can only be reached via Tajikistan. Information about the avalanche disaster reached the provincial capital Faizabad city only on 6 March.

An emergency response team from FOCUS, based in Tajikistan, is en route to Shaki district with 20 tents, 50 family kits and 100 plastic sheets. However, reaching the affected area in Afghanistan is hampered by border crossing procedures. The district has some contingency stocks in place as part of winter-preparedness and drought response. In particular, WFP had pre-positioned 161 MT food for 945 families in Shaki district while the Department of Agriculture provided food assistance to 500 households in the district.

III. Humanitarian Needs and Response

Needs: Search and rescue teams, emergency medical assistance, food, emergency shelter including heating

Response: FOCUS emergency response team with NFI supplies

Gaps & Constraints: Access, air lifting and evacuation capacity, emergency medical assistance, food, emergency shelter, heating

IV. Coordination

Badakhshan provincial government called for an emergency Provincial Disaster Management Committee (PDMC) meeting in Faizabad city on 6 March 2012. The meeting was attended by government, donors and humanitarian agencies. The PDMC requested for professional search and rescue assistance, evacuation assistance and air lifting capacity. National clusters and the provincial humanitarian team are mobilizing emergency relief.

V. Funding

All humanitarian partners, including donors and recipient agencies, are encouraged to inform OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS - <http://fts.unocha.org>) of cash and in-kind contributions by e-mailing: fts@un.org.

VI. Contact

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